



Montana Legislature

Senate Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation Committee

SENATE AGRICULTURE

EXHIBIT NO. 7

DATE 3-24-09

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BILL NO. HB 945

March 26, 2009

The Honorable Jon Tester
204 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 29510

Dear Senator Tester:

As members of the Montana Legislature's Senate Committee on Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation, we have heard much testimony this session from a variety of Montana livestock producers regarding the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). We want to express our concerns, and theirs, about any effort by Congress or the U.S. Department of Agriculture to make NAIS a mandatory program. We would respectfully ask that you oppose any federal effort to force producers to participate in NAIS. Several market-driven age and source verification systems that use individual animal traceability are already being developed, and these systems give producers an economic incentive to participate. We support giving producers the option of participating voluntarily, and we urge you to resist any effort to mandate participation by ranchers and feeders in NAIS.

In addition to their concerns about maintaining the voluntary nature of NAIS, a number of Montanans who testified before our committee stressed the importance of maintaining confidentiality of the information that is collected in any animal identification program.

We know that you also hear those same concerns from producers, but we wanted to emphasize them, in our position as Montana lawmakers, on behalf of those who have spoken before our committee this session.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and for all you do on behalf of Montana agriculture.

Sincerely,

Sen. Donald Steinbeisser
Sen. Donald Steinbeisser, Chair

Sen. Gary Branae
Sen. Gary Branae

Sen. Taylor Brown
Sen. Taylor Brown

Sen. Brad Hamlett
Sen. Brad Hamlett

Sen. Rick Ripley
Sen. Rick Ripley

Sen. Terry Murphy
Sen. Terry Murphy, Vice Chair

Sen. Ken Hansen
Sen. Ken Hansen

Sen. Verdell Jackson
Sen. Verdell Jackson

Sen. Cliff Larsen
Sen. Cliff Larsen



Montana Legislature

Senate Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation Committee

March 26, 2009

The Honorable Max Baucus
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Baucus:

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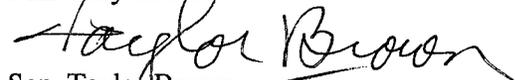
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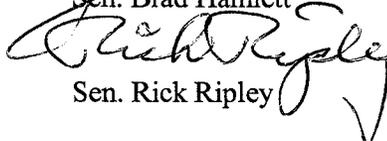
Sincerely,


Sen. Donald Steinbeisser, Chair


Sen. Gary Branae

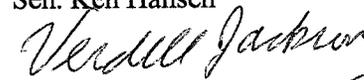

Sen. Taylor Brown


Sen. Brad Hamlett


Sen. Rick Ripley


Sen. Terry Murphy, Vice Chair


Sen. Ken Hansen


Sen. Verdell Jackson


Sen. Cliff Larsen



Montana Legislature

Senate Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation Committee

March 26, 2009

The Honorable Dennis Rehberg
2448 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 29515

Dear Congressman Rehberg:

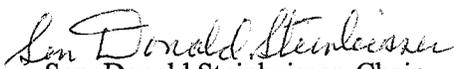
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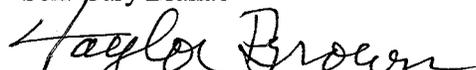
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